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### 2022 Carole Weinstein Author Series Kicks Off with Dr. Gregory Samantha Rosenthal and Kristen Green

February and April talks explore a multigenerational southern LGBTQ community and the inspiring true story of an enslaved woman who liberated an infamous slave jail.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – The Library of Virginia announces the first two events in its **2022 Carole Weinstein Author Series** ([www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein)), featuring talks by a history professor and a *New York Times* best-selling author and journalist on their fascinating recent books:

- February 24, 2022 (in person & livestreamed) – Dr. Gregory Samantha Rosenthal | **Living Queer History: Remembrance and Belonging in a Southern City**
- April 14, 2022 (in person & livestreamed) – Kristen Green | **The Devil's Half Acre: The Untold Story of How One Woman Liberated the South's Most Notorious Slave Jail**

The Carole Weinstein Author Series supports the literary arts by bringing both new and well-known authors to the Library of Virginia. **Free and open to the public**, the series focuses on Virginia authors and Virginia subjects across all genres. Authors answer questions from the audience and sign copies of their books. February and April's in-person talks will also be livestreamed on the Library's Facebook ([www.facebook.com/LibraryofVA](https://www.facebook.com/LibraryofVA)) and YouTube pages ([www.youtube.com/user/LibraryofVa](https://www.youtube.com/user/LibraryofVa)).

For more information, contact Dawn Greggs at 804.692.3813 or [dawn.greggs@lva.virginia.gov](mailto:dawn.greggs@lva.virginia.gov).

**SCHEDULE | To Register:** [www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/weinstein)

**Thursday, February 24, 2022 | 6:00–7:30 PM | Library of Virginia Lecture Hall**

**Dr. Gregory Samantha Rosenthal**

800 East Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

[www.lva.virginia.gov](http://www.lva.virginia.gov)

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### ***Living Queer History: Remembrance and Belonging in a Southern City***

Gregory Samantha Rosenthal (she/her or they/them) is associate professor of history and coordinator of the Public History Concentration at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia. She is the author of two books, *Living Queer History: Remembrance and Belonging in a Southern City* and *Beyond Hawai'i: Native Labor in the Pacific World*. They are co-founder of the Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project, a nationally recognized queer public history initiative. Her work has received recognition from the National Council on Public History, the Oral History Association, the Committee on LGBT History, the American Society for Environmental History, and the Working Class Studies Association. Their website: <https://gsrosenthal.com>

### **About *Living Queer History: Remembrance and Belonging in a Southern City***

Queer history is a living practice. Talk to any group of LGBTQ people today, and they will not agree on what story should be told. Many people desire to celebrate the past by erecting plaques and painting rainbow crosswalks, but queer and trans people in the 21st century need more than just symbols—they need access to power, justice for marginalized people, spaces of belonging. Approaching the past through a lens of queer and trans survival and world-building transforms history itself into a tool for imagining and realizing a better future.

*Living Queer History* explores an LGBTQ community in Roanoke, Virginia, a small city on the edge of Appalachia. Interweaving historical analysis, theory, and memoir, Gregory Samantha Rosenthal tells the story of their own journey—coming out and transitioning as a transgender woman—in the midst of working on a community-based history project that documented a multigenerational southern LGBTQ community. Based on over 40 interviews with LGBTQ elders, *Living Queer History* explores how queer people today think about the past and how history lives on in the present.

**Thursday, April 14, 2022 | 6:00–7:30 PM | Library of Virginia Lecture Hall**

**Kristen Green**

### ***The Devil's Half Acre:***

### ***The Untold Story of How One Woman Liberated the South's Most Notorious Slave Jail***

Kristen Green is the author of *Something Must Be Done About Prince Edward County*, a *New York Times* best seller and an “editor’s choice.” Green received the 2016 Library of Virginia Literary Award for Nonfiction for the book. She has worked for two decades as a reporter for newspapers including the *Boston Globe* and the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, and she holds a master’s in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School. She is a fellow with Virginia Humanities and a former writer-in-residence at the Library of Virginia. She lives in Richmond, Virginia, with her husband and two daughters. Her website: <https://kristengreen.net>

### **About *The Devil's Half Acre: The Untold Story of How One Woman Liberated the South's Most Notorious Slave Jail***

In *The Devil's Half Acre*, *New York Times* best-selling author and journalist Kristen Green draws on years of research to tell the extraordinary and little-known story of young Mary Lumpkin, an enslaved woman who blazed a path of liberation for thousands. She was forced to have the children of a brutal slave trader and live on the premises of his slave jail, known as the “Devil’s Half Acre.” When she inherited the jail after the death of her slaveholder, she transformed it into “God’s Half Acre,” a school where Black men could

fulfill their dreams. It still exists today as Virginia Union University, one of America's first Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

A sweeping narrative of a life in the margins of the American slave trade, *The Devil's Half Acre* brings Mary Lumpkin into the light. This is the story of the resilience of a woman on the path to freedom, her historic contributions, and her enduring legacy.

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### **About the Library of Virginia**

The Library of Virginia is one of the oldest agencies of Virginia government, founded in 1823 to preserve and provide access to the state's incomparable printed and manuscript holdings. Its collection, which has grown steadily through the years, is the most comprehensive resource in the world for the study of Virginia history, culture, and government with over 130 million items in the collections. The Library also engages the public through in-person and virtual events, education programs, and online resources that reach nearly 4 million individuals each year throughout the commonwealth and beyond.

**January 21, 2022**